

according to the testimony of the farmers, thousands once dwelt, drinking at their own fountains, and killing their own game; but now, alas, scarcely is a family to be seen! It is impossible to look over those now uninhabited plains and mountain glens without feeling the deepest melancholy, whilst the winds moaning in the vale seem to echo back the sound, "Where are they?"

[While the foregoing sheets were going through the press, intelligence having reached Melbourne of the value, as an edible seed, of the *Marsilea hirsuta* (or Nardo), as found so useful in the Victorian Expedition, and which was the means of saving the lives of King, the sole survivor of Burke's party, as well as those of Lyons and M'Pherson, who had been sent with despatches to Mr. Burke, it has occurred to me that it would be well to mention that I found the same plant growing in Dumby Bay, Port Lincoln; but I did not observe that the natives had ever made any use of it as an article of food.]

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ART. XI.—Description of a New Species of *Plumatella*. By  
P. H. MCGILLIVRAY, A.M., M.R.C.S.

[Read before the Society, October 29th, 1860.]

THE study of the fresh water polyzoa has been so completely neglected by naturalists, except in Europe and North America, that at the date of publication of Professor Allman's great monograph, no species were known to occur south of the north temperate zone. Since that time a new form—*Hislopia lacustris*—has been described from Nagpoor, in Central India, by Mr. H. J. Carter, who has also found in the tanks at Bombay a species of *Lophopus* and a *Plumatella*, identical with *P. stricta*, Allm.\* With these exceptions I believe that no addition to the geographical range has been made since the appearance of Allman's work.

Having long been familiar with the extreme richness of our fauna in marine polyzoa, I was satisfied that fresh water forms required only to be looked for to be found; and Mr. Aplin, of the geological survey, to whom I expressed this opinion, at once commenced the search. The result has

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been the discovery of a species of *Plumatella* in great abundance, in the quarries at Richmond, and I have no doubt that many others will ere long be added to the list.

*Plumatella Aplinii*, n. sp.

Cænæcium dichotomously or irregularly branched, creeping, cells expanded upwards, mouth oblique, oval, with the anterior lip pointed; a strong ridge running along the front of the cænæcium, and extending entirely or partly up the cells; no furrow; tentacles, sixty; statoblasts elongated.

Locality: On stones in old quarries at Richmond, on timber in the lagoon in the Survey Paddock, and on a stump in the lagoon in the Botanic Gardens.—C. D'OYLEY H. APLIN, Esq.

This beautiful polyzoon occurs in masses of various extent, in some specimens covering several square inches. The cænæcium is irregularly branched, sometimes leaving wide interspaces, at other times densely covering the object to which it is attached. It is usually closely adherent, but occasionally the extremities of the branches are free and semi-erect. On the front of the branches of the cænæcium there is a continuous prominent keel or ridge, which also extends up the cells. The cells are short, expanding towards the orifice, so as to be in some cases almost funnel-shaped; the mouth is oblique, oval, and frequently, from the continuation of the ridge, pointed anteriorly. There is no groove. Only free stato-blasts have been observed; they are of an oblong elliptical form, with a wide annulus.

The characters presented by this species are so well marked, that it may at once be readily distinguished from all previously known. Its nearest ally is probably *P. emarginata*, Allm., with which it agrees in the presence of a ridge, and in the elongated stato-blasts; but differs in the form of the cell, and in the absence of the furrow at the cell-mouth, and in the number of the tentacles.